

CHAPTER 9 OBTAIN CERTIFICATE NUMBER FOR AN AIR OPERATOR OR AIR AGENCY

1. GENERAL. The Operational Systems Branch, AFS-620, manages and controls all air operator and air agency certificate numbers. The numbering system used by AFS-620, provides a standardized format, a multitude of possible numbers, and a central location for assigning, storing, and retrieving information.

3. ELEMENTS OF A CERTIFICATE NUMBER

A. Four Elements of a Certificate Number. A certificate number consists of four elements: the “designator” element, the “type” element, the “numeric” element, and the “alpha suffix” element. For example, the operator certificate number RWI-L-001-A (or RWIL001A without the dashes) denotes the following:

(1) *RWI (designator element).* The “designator” element is a designation using combinations of three letters. An air operator or air agency applicant may request a specific three-letter designator. Given the 26 letters of the alphabet in combinations of three, there are 17,576 possible, unique combinations. Thus, an operator can personalize the designator received.

(a) For FAR Part 121, 125, 135, 145, 147, and 149 applicants, this can be accomplished on the Preapplication Statement of Intent (PASI).

(b) For FAR Part 129, 133, 137, or 141 applicants, the three-letter designators can be requested in the letter of intent and/or on the respective application forms.

(c) AFS-620 shall attempt to accommodate the applicant’s request. If all three choices have already been assigned or if the applicant does not provide any choices, AFS-620 issues the first available, random designator.

(2) *L (type element).* The “type” element identifies the type of certificate and the applicable regulation. AFS-620 always assigns an organization with operations having different types of certificates the same three-letter designator with the “type” element assuring the differentiation.

AIR OPERATORS

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE	TYPE ELEMENT	FAR PART
Air Carrier Certificate	A	121/135
Operating Certificate (Business/private carriage)	B	125
Operating Certificate (commercial)	C	121/135
Foreign Operator (Operations specifications only)	F	129
Agricultural Aircraft Operator	G	137
Rotorcraft External-Load Operator	L	133
FAR Part 125 Full Deviation Holder (Certificate number not issued)	M	91

AIR AGENCIES

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE	TYPE ELEMENT	FAR PART
Domestic Satellite Repair Station	D	145
Parachute Loft	P	149
Domestic Repair Station	R	145
Pilot School	S	141
Aviation Maintenance Tech School	T	141
Provisional Pilot School	V	141
Foreign Repair Station	Y	145
Foreign Satellite Repair Station	Z	145

(3) *001 (numeric element).* The “number” element provides 999 (001 to 999) certificate number combinations for each type of certificate.

(4) *A (alpha suffix element).* The “alpha suffix” element provides even more possible combinations by established 25 alphabet groups (A through Z, excluding P which is used to denote a precertification number for FAR Part 125 only). When all possible number element combinations (001 to 999) have been used for a particular type of certificate, the alpha suffix changes to the next letter alphabetically. For example, take the imaginary external-load operator number ELO-L-999-A.

A. The next external-load operator certificate number, regardless of the designator, will be: XYZ-L-001-B.

B. *Certificate Commonality.* This number system also allows operators who hold different types of certificates to maintain a certain amount of commonality in their certificate numbers. For example, an air operator who is also an air agency can have the same designator:

Number: RWI-L-001-A

Elements: RWI - Rotorworks International

L - External-Load Operator

001 - First certificated external-load operator

A - First group alphabetically

Number: RWI-R-003-A

Elements: RWI - Rotorworks International

R - Repair Station

002 - Second certificated repair station

A - First group alphabetically

5. PRECERTIFICATION NUMBERS. The letter “P” is used as the alpha suffix element for the temporary precertification number used for FAR Part 125 applicants. Upon successful completion of the certification process, the “P” is changed to the appropriate alpha suffix element (A through Z, excluding P).

7. RESTRICTIONS

A. *Number Assignment.* The complete certification number (all eight characters), once assigned to a particular organization, is never assigned to another.

B. Reassignment of Designators

(1) Regardless of the type of certificate, the designator element of an organization that has become inactive or has terminated operations shall not be reassigned to a different organization until at least three years have elapsed. During the three year time period, the designator can be reassigned to the original organization if it resumes operations.

(2) After the three year period, the number can be assigned to another organization provided there is no record of significance associated with the designator element in any of the databases maintained by AFS-620. If a designator element has an associated record of significance, AFS-620 shall not reassign the designator element for at least 10 years.

C. *Alpha Suffix Combination Reassignment.* Organizations which have more than one type of certificate, who conduct business under more than one operating regulation are assigned identical numeric elements for each assigned certificate number, wherever possible. A specific numeric element can be reassigned provided a different alpha suffix element is assigned. For example, 999 can be used with an “A” alpha suffix and also with a “B” alpha suffix.

9. TERMINATION OF THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS. If an applicant for a FAR Part 121, 125, 135, 145, 147, or 149 certificate terminates the certification process prior to certificate issuance, the district office must inform AFS-620 so that the precertification number and the three-letter designator can be released for future use. The same holds true for when the FAA terminates the process.

NOTE: FAR Part 129, 133, 137, or 141 applicants are not affected since they are not issued precertification numbers.